

Mayflower Incident Unified Command Joint Information Center

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Update on Cleanup Operations in Mayflower, AR

MAYFLOWER, AR – The Mayflower Incident Unified Command Joint Information Center provided the following update as cleanup operations continued Tuesday following a release of crude oil near Mayflower, AR.

- A plan is being developed for the phased return of residents to 22 homes on Starlite Road and Shade Tree Lane in the North Woods subdivision. The next step involves the replacement of impacted soil, which is scheduled to begin today. A determination of when residents return to their homes will be made by state health authorities.
- An excavation and removal plan for the affected portion of pipeline is being developed for review by the U.S. Department of Transportation.
- As reported previously, Lake Conway was not impacted and a comprehensive containment system using boom has been laid out as a precaution to contain oil found in the marsh area above the cove, between the interstate highway and the cove.
- ExxonMobil Pipeline Company has established a claims hotline (1-800-876-9291) for residents affected by the spill to register a claim and get more information. About 90 claims have been made to date.
- Continuous air quality monitoring is being conducted by both the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and ExxonMobil, and data is being provided to the Arkansas Department of Health. Current air quality readings are below levels likely to cause health effects (with the exception of the cleanup areas where the emergency responders are directly working). Workers in those areas have air quality monitors and breathing equipment for use when necessary.
- Local emergency responders from the city and county continue to participate in a safe and responsible cleanup operation. The efficiency of the effort would not be possible without all the contributions of these professionals.
- U.S. Environmental Services has begun a wildlife rehabilitation operation on-site and is working with Animal Response Services on a treatment program. Fourteen oiled ducks, two turtles, and one muskrat have been recovered for treatment. Two additional ducks have been found dead. If residents find injured or oiled wildlife, they should call the claims hotline (1-800-876-9291) so that a trained professional can assist and minimize any potential harm. Residents are being asked not to approach wildlife for their safety and the safety of the wildlife.
- Fifteen vacuum trucks and 33 storage tanks are on site to clean up and temporarily store the oil. Approximately 12,000 barrels of water and oil were recovered in the first several days, representing most of the free standing oil. Crews are starting the removal of contaminated soil and vegetation from residential areas. Approximately 330 personnel are responding to the incident in addition to federal, state, and local resources.

- A community meeting was held on Saturday, March 30, less than 24 hours after the incident began, with presentations from members of the Unified Command, which includes the EPA, Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality, Arkansas Department of Health, Faulkner County, Mayflower, and ExxonMobil Pipeline Company.
- Emergency response personnel were on the ground within 30 minutes after the leak was detected.
- Emergency response efforts are focused on ensuring the safety of the community members and the response workers, addressing community concerns and the cleanup process.
- The EPA categorizes the incident as a major spill. This category reflects a quantity greater than 250 barrels. A few thousand barrels of oil were observed in the area; a response for 10,000 barrels has been undertaken to ensure adequate resources are in place.
- The cause of the spill is under investigation.